

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 23 to 42 are pending in the present application. Claims 23-26 and 34-42 stand rejected. Claims 27-33 are objected to. In the present Amendment, claims 23-26 and 41-42 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and the specification and claims 27-37 and 39 have been amended. New claims 43 and 44 have been added. No new matter has been introduced into the present application by any of the amendments or by the addition of the new claims. Reconsideration of the present application is respectfully requested in view of the following remarks.

Statement of the Substance of Interview

Applicants held a telephonic interview with the Examiner on May 19, 2004. During the interview, all of the claims were discussed and the Examiner indicated that he had an additional reference that he intended to cite against some of the claims of the present application. Applicants stated that they would have to review the reference. No agreement was reached with respect to any claim.

The rejection of claims 23-25, 34, 35, 37 and 39 under 35 U.S.C. 102(b), as being anticipated by Ensminger et al. (US 5,395,816) is respectfully traversed. However, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection has been rendered moot by the amendments to the claims.

The rejection of claims 26, 36, 38 and 40-42 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ensminger et al. is respectfully traversed. However, it is respectfully submitted that this rejection has been rendered moot by the amendments to the claims.

The objection to claims 27-33 has been noted. Applicants appreciate the Examiner's acknowledgment that the subject matter of these claims is allowable. In the present Amendment, applicants have revised claims 27-33 as suggested by the Examiner. It is respectfully submitted that claims 27-33 are now in allowable condition.

Applicants have also revised claims 34 to 40 so that these claims are dependent, directly or indirectly, on claim 27. Accordingly, claims 34 to 40 should also be in allowable condition. New claims 43 and 44 should be allowable for the same reasons that claims 33 and 27 are allowable.

Withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103, and the allowance of claims 27-40 and 43-44, is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,
CONNOLLY BOVE LODGE & HUTZ LLP

By 

William E. McShane
Registration No. 32,707
Telephone: 302 888-6248

::ODMA\MHODMA\CB\351467\1